

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**REGULAR MEETING****Monday, May 11, 1998**

Present: June Bailey, Lucy Burtnett, Bob Martz, M.S. Mitchell, William Sanders

Absent: Pat Consolver and Leon Robinson

Also Present: Terry Smythe, Baughman Co.; Charles McAfee, J.M. Limited; Terry Kollmai, Property Management; and Maryann Crockett, Larry Hoetmer, Vince Kendrick, Janice McKinney, and Tim Vanatta (staff)

President Burtnett called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. The minutes of the regular meeting of April 13, 1998, were reviewed and approved.

1. **Request for drainage easement at South Lakes Park.** Larry Hoetmer, Park Landscape Architect, introduced Terry Smythe, Baughman Co. Smythe referred board members to a map of the proposed drainage easement which was located east of Campus High School in the Simmons Park Addition. He reviewed both the original and revised proposals stating that the original proposal called for the drainage pipe to empty directly into the lake. He said the revised proposal rerouted the 48" drainage pipe into an existing drainage ditch located at 55th Street South.

Hoetmer commented that park staff was interested in preserving the lake, trees and other natural resources and habitat in the area. Mitchell asked if runoff from the 47th Street South drainage project and Dutchman's nursery drained into the lake. Hoetmer responded yes. Bailey expressed concern regarding the 48" drainage pipe becoming an attractive nuisance to children in the area. She asked if some type of grate could be installed at the end of the pipe. Smythe said he had never installed a pipe with grating and didn't know about the liability of that type of installation. Hoetmer added that staff and Baughman were also discussing the possibility of installing some type of vegetation to screen the pipe.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Sanders, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to grant the easement based on a plan to be reviewed at the June Park Board Meeting.

OFF THE AGENDA ITEM

1. **Request to purchase property at 27th and Hillside.** Director Vanatta reintroduced the request that the Park Board review the proposal by J.M. Limited to purchase approximately 38 acres of land owned by the City at 27th and Hillside to construct a plant for the manufacture of modular housing. Director Vanatta stated that at the April 13 Park Board Meeting, the Board had voted to recommend that the City Council sell the southern portion of the property, consisting of approximately 18.5 acres, to J.M. Limited for the

manufacturing plant. Director Vanatta introduced Charles McAfee, J.M. Limited.

McAfee began his presentation by referring board members to a map of the area. He commented that J.M. Limited already owned approximately 20 acres west of the 27th and Hillside property and that the company had a substantial investment in the area including an assisted living care project, townhouses and single family housing. He said he was familiar with the area and added that another reason for the proposed location was to encourage individuals who lived in the neighborhood who may not have transportation to apply for jobs at the plant. He made several comments regarding the condition of the surrounding City owned land, which he said was littered with trash and was not being mowed or maintained. He stated that many years ago he was involved in conversations about the possibility of a bike path in the area and further development of Grove Park. He said Chisholm Creek and the immediate area around the creek had been left out of the legal description of the proposed property purchase and that he would be willing to provide landscaping in and around the proposed manufacturing complex.

McAfee provided a drawing of the 120,000 sq. ft. manufacturing plant, staging/storage area, model home display area, learning/training center, day care center and training housing which he indicated would appear to be a normal neighborhood. He stated that J.M. Limited would be creating an economy that did not previously exist in the area. He said his company currently employees over one hundred people and that the new plant would create another three hundred employment opportunities. He referred to other award winning facilities he had created in area including Cavalry Baptist Church, Cavalry Towers and the bathhouse and swimming pool at McAdams Park. He added that he had also donated \$3,000 to the tennis program at McAdams Park. He said that the schedule for plant construction was "very tight" and that construction must begin immediately in order for the J.M. Limited to fill current orders. He said if he did not receive clearance, he would have to locate the facility somewhere else. He concluded his remarks by asking the Board to support the project.

President Burnett thanked Mr. McAfee for his presentation and stated that no one could dispute the good he has done and continues to do for the community. She continued by commenting that according to the Park and Open Space Plan there was a deficiency of park land in that area of Wichita. She said if the property at 27th and Hillside was sold, the City would have to purchase additional land somewhere else in the area to make up the deficit.

Mitchell explained that his recommendation at the April meeting to extend the line straight across to Hillside was based on the fact that there was a good market for junior football in that area. He added that additional parking and another road for ingress/egress was also needed. He asked McAfee about phasing in the first part of the project on the south half of the land. He said in the meantime, the north half would remain public park land until the City made a decision concerning how that area would be used in the future with regard to

extending the football fields, adding additional parking and constructing an access road to Hillside. He said that was a compromise that would leave both parties with something. McAfee said that

wouldn't work, that he needed the entire 38 acres he had requested. He referred to the City owned land north of the proposed purchase which he said could be developed for park purposes.

Burnett opened the meeting for public comment. The following individuals spoke:

- Bill Fox, President, Riverside Citizens Association (RCA) and past President, Wichita Independent Neighborhoods (WIN) - he stated that the RCA was opposed to any park land in the City being sold to developers. He added that Jim Roseboro, current President of WIN, was also opposed to the sale. He concluded by asking why the land had not been developed for park purposes and why Grove Park had not been enhanced.

- Frank Smith - mentioned the "21st Street North Corridor Revitalization Study" completed by Mr. McAfee in 1989 criticized land use in the area and the fact that there was not enough park land. He said he fully supported the project, but felt that an industrial manufacturing plant was not an appropriate use of the land in that area close to the neighborhood. He said for the past twenty years the City has invested in housing loans and grants to try to maintain the surrounding neighborhood. He recommended that the City support the proposal and find another location for the manufacturing plant.

There was discussion concerning several alternative locations for plant construction including an area west and north of the proposed location, which McAfee commented should be a "super fund site" because of open sewer drainage and waste from Derby Oil Co. McAfee also commented that he had tried to negotiate for a site in Bridgeport.

Sanders commented that the area being discussed was his neighborhood; that he owned land in the area; that he felt the City owned too much land; that there was already commercial development in the area; that Grove Park was only used for Saturday football games and that the City should get rid of the whole thing; and that the Park Department had trouble maintaining the parks it already had.

Martz asked about the long-range plan for the area. Director Vanatta said a plan was developed when the land was originally acquired; however, some of the recreational needs in the area had changed. He also mentioned development of the new soccer/baseball complex further north and east.

President Burnett indicated that it was the consensus of the Board to take no further action but to let the action of the April 13 meeting stand.

AGENDA

2. **Request to accept a parcel of land located between 35th Street South and the drainage right-of-way North of I-235, Schraft 3rd Addn. for use as park land.** Requested by M.S.

Mitchell. Mitchell referred board members to a copy of his correspondence (with attached petitions) to Director Vanatta regarding the proposed land donation in Schraft 3rd Addn. He referred to a map and outlined the area of the proposed donation. He said the owner would be willing to donate the land to the City for park purposes if he could obtain commercial zoning on the Meridian frontage north of Big Slough, and get a part of a very wide drainage right-of-way just east of Meridian vacated to attach to the commercial tract. He added that the two petitions attached to his correspondence were signed by all but one resident of 35th Street South which was adjacent to the proposed park site. He said the next step was to take the proposal to the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission for the proposed rezoning. He concluded by saying that the land was intended for "passive" use and except for occasional mowing, there should be no additional maintenance burden for the Park Department. Mitchell recommended that the Board take whatever action was appropriate to let Mr. Schraft know that they agree with the concept so he can proceed with the rezoning and vacation requests.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Martz, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to recommend that the City accept Mr. Schraft's offer pending staff research into legal requirements and action by Property Management. He requested that a report be furnished to the Board at the June meeting.

Director Vanatta announced that Bucher, Willis & Ratliff, park consultants, would be conducting "visioning workshops" for the public on May 26, 27 and 28 in various parts of the City. He said staff would provide board members a copy of the flyer with meeting locations.

Mitchell requested that the Board review the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget at the next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Lucy Burnett, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk